
CORIOLANUS

A

TRAGEDY.



2
CORIOLANUS.

A
T R A G E D Y.

As it is Acted at the
THEATRE ROYAL,
IN
COVENT-GARDEN.

By the late *JAMES THOMSON.* K



D U B L I N :

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M D C C X L I X.

CORLIOLANUS

T R A G E D Y

THE

COLLUSION



1884

1884

For O. and
J. E. L. L. L.
1884

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. QUIN.

I Come not here, your Candour to implore
For Scenes, whose Author is, alas! no more;
He wants no Advocate his Cause to plead;
You will yourselves be Patrons of the Dead.
No Party his Benevolence confin'd,
No Sect — alike it flow'd to all Mankind.
He lov'd his Friends (forgive this gushing Tear;
Alas! I feel I am no Actor here)
He lov'd his Friends with such a Warmth of Heart,
So clear of Int'rest, so devoid of Art,
Such generous Freedom, such unshaken Zeal,
No Words can speak it, but our Tears may tell —
O candid Truth, O Faith without a Stain,
O Manners gently firm, and nobly plain,
O sympathizing Love of others Bliss,
Where will you find another Breast like His? —
Such was the Man — the Poet well you know:
Oft has he touch'd your Hearts with tender Woe;
Oft in this croud'd House with just Applause
You heard him teach fair Virtue's purest Laws;
For his chaste Muse employ'd her Heav'n-taught Lyre
None but the noblest Passions to inspire,
Not one immoral, one corrupted Thought,
One Line, which dying he could wish to blot.
Oh may to Night your favourable Doom
Another Laurel add to grace his Tomb:
Whilst he, superior now to Praise or Blame,
Hears not the feeble Voice of Human Fame.
Yet is to those whom most on Earth he lov'd,
From whom his pious Care is now remov'd,
With whom his liberal Hand, and bounteous Heart
Shar'd all his little Fortune could impart,
If to those Friends your kind Regard shall give
What they no longer can from his receive,
That, that, ev'n now, above yon starry Pole,
May touch with Pleasure his immortal Soul.

The Persons Represented.

<i>Caius Marcius Coriolanus.</i>	Mr. Quin.
<i>Attius Tullus</i> , General of the <i>Vol-</i> <i>scian</i> Army.	Mr. Ryan.
<i>Galesus</i> , one of the Deputies of the <i>Volscian</i> States attending the Camp.	Mr. Delane.
The other Deputies of the <i>Volsci-</i> <i>an</i> States.	
<i>Volusus</i> , one of the principal <i>Volscian</i> Officers.	Mr. Sparks.
<i>Titus</i> , Freed-man of <i>Galesus</i> .	Mr. Ridout.
<i>Marcus Minucius</i> , Consul and Principal of the Deputation from <i>Rome</i> to <i>Coriolanus</i> .	Mr. Bridgewater.
<i>Publius Cincinnatus</i> , a Consular Senator, one of the Deputa- tion, and who had been the <i>Roman</i> General at the taking of <i>Corioli</i> .	Mr. Anderson.
<i>Veturia</i> , Mother of <i>Coriolanus</i> .	Mrs. Woffington.
<i>Volumnia</i> , Wife of <i>Coriolanus</i> .	Miss Bellamy.
<i>Roman</i> Senators, Priests, Augurs, &c. of the first De- putation. <i>Roman</i> Ladies, in the Train of <i>Veturia</i> and <i>Volumnia</i> , of the second Deputation.	

Volscian Officers, Lictors, Soldiers, &c.

S C E N E, The *Volscian* Camp.



CORIOLANUS.

A

TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Volscian Camp.

ATTIUS TULLUS, VOLUSIUS.

VOLUSIUS.

WHENCE is it, *Tullus*, that our Arms are stopt
Here on the Borders of the *Roman* State?
Why sleeps that Spirit, whose Heroic Ardour
Urg'd you to break the Truce, and pour'd our Host,
From all th'united Cantons of the *Volsci*,
On their unguarded Frontier, such Designs
Brook not an Hour's Delay; their whole Success
Depends on instant vigorous Execution.

A 4

Tul.

Tul. Volufius, I approve thy brave Impatience;
 And will to thee, in Confidence of Friendship,
 Difclose my fecret Soul. Thou know'ft *Galefus*,
 Whose Freedom *Caius Marcius*, once his Guest,
 Of all the Spoil of sack'd *Corioli*,
 Alone demanded; and who thence to *Rome*,
 From Gratitude and Friendship follow'd *Marcus*:
 Whence lately to our *Antium* he return'd,
 With Overtures of Peace propos'd by *Rome*.

Vol. I know him well; an antiquated Sage
 Of that romantic School, *Pythagoras*
 Eftablifh'd here, on our *Hesperian* Shore;
 Whose gentle Dictates only ferve to tame
 Enfeebled Mortals into Slaves.

Tul. Galefus,
 Doubtlefs, poffeffes many civil Virtues;
 Is gentle, good; for rectitude of Heart
 And Innocence of Life by all rever'd.

Vol. Pardon me, *Tullus*, if my faithful Bluntness
 Deems you too lib'ral in his Praise. In Peace,
 Such may perhaps do well, when Prating rules
 An idle World; but in tempeftuous Times
 They are ftark naught, thefe visionary Statesmen,
 Fit Rulers only for their golden Age.
 The rugged Genius of rapacious *Rome*
 For other Men, and other Counfels, calls.

Tul. Your Thoughts are mine --- I only meant to tell
 The Part he bears in this ill-tim'd delay. [thee

Soon as our gather'd Army march'd from *Antium*,
 The *Roman* Senate, whose attentive Caution
 Watch'd all our Motions, took at once th'Alarm
 And fent a Herald, ere we paff their Borders,
 With formal Ceremony, to demand
 The Cause of our Approach.---Had I been Master,
 I would have answer'd at the Gates of *Rome*.
 But this *Galefus*, who attends our Camp
 Among the *Volfcian* Deputies, fo pleaded
 The Laws of Nations, made fuch loud Complaints
 Againft th'Infraction of the Public Faith,
 So teaz'd us with the Pedantry of States,

That

CORIOLANUS.

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That I was forc'd, unwilling, to permit
His Freedman, *Titus*, to be sent to *Rome*
With our Demands. If these the Senate grants,
We then are in the Toils of Peace entangled,
In spite of all my Efforts to avoid them.

Vol. O 'tis a wild Chimera! Peace with *Rome*!
Dream not of that, unless the *Volscean* Courage
Be quite subdu'd, and only seeks to gild
A vile Submission with that specious Name.
Learn Wisdom from your Neighbours. Peace with *Rome*
Has quell'd the *Latines*, tam'd their free-born Spirit,
And by her Friendship honour'd them with Chains.

Tul. She ne'er will grant it on the just Conditions
I now have brought the *Volsci* to demand:
The Restitution of our conquer'd Cities,
And fair Alliance upon equal Terms.
I know the *Roman* Insolence will scorn
To yield to this: And *Titus* must return
Within three Days, the longest Term allow'd him;
Of which the Third is near elaps'd already.
Then even *Galesus* will not dare to stop us,
With superstitious Forms, and solemn Trifles,
For letting loose th'unbridled Rage of War
Against those hated Tyrants of *Hesperia*.

Vol. Thanks to the Gods! my Sword will then be free.
Then, poor *Corioli*! thy bleeding Wounds,
Thy Treasures sack'd, thy captivated Matrons,
Shall amply be reveng'd by thy *Volusius*:
Then, *Tullus*, from the lofty Brows of *Marcus*
Thou may'st regain the Wreaths his conquering Hand
By partial Fortune aided, tore from thine.

Tul. O my *Volusius*! thou, who art a Soldier,
A try'd and brave one too, say, in thy Heart
Dost thou not scorn me? thou, who saw'st me bend
Beneath the half-spent Thunder of a Foe,
Warm from the Conquest of *Corioli*,
Which, rushing furious in with those, whose Sally
He had repell'd, he seiz'd almost alone;
And gave to Fire and Sword. Yet thence he flew,
Scorning the Plunder of our richest City,

His

His Wounds undrest, without a Moment's Respite,
To where our Armies on the fearful Edge
Of Battle stood ; and, asking of the Consul
To be oppos'd to me, with mighty Rage,
Refistless, bore us down.

Vol. True Valour, *Tullus*,
Lies in the Mind, the never-yielding Purpose,
Nor owns the blind Award of giddy Fortune.

Tul. My Soul, my Friend, my Soul is all on Fire !
Thirst of Revenge consumes me ! the Revenge
Of generous Emulation, not of Hatred.
This happy *Roman*, this proud *Marcus* haunts me.
Each troubled Night, when Slaves and Captives sleep,
Forgetful of their Chains, I, in my Dreams,
Anew am vanquish'd ; and, beneath his Sword
With Horror sinking, feel a tenfold Death,
The Death of Honour. But I will redeem ———
Yes, *Marcus*, I will yet redeem my Fame.
To face thee once again is the great Purpose
For which alone I live. --- Till then how slow,
How tedious lags the Time ! while Shame corrodes me,
With many a bitter Thought ; and injur'd Honour
Sick, and desponding, preys upon itself.

Vol. It fast approaches now, the Hour of Vengeance,
To this fam'd Land, to ancient *Latium* due.
Unballanc'd *Rome*, at Variance with herself,
To Order lost, in deep and hot Commotion,
Stands on the dangerous Point of Civil War ;
Her haughty Nobles and seditious Commons
Reviling, fearing, hating one another :
While, on our Part, all wears a prosperous Face :
Our Troops united, numerous, high in Spirit,
As if their Gen'ral's Soul inform'd them all.
O long expected Day !

Tul. Go, brave *Volusus*,
Go breathe thy Ardour into every Breast,
That when the *Volscian* Envoy shall return,
Whom ere the Close of Evening I expect,
One Spirit may unite us in the Cause
Of generous Freedom and our native Rights,
So long oppress'd by *Rome's* encroaching Power.

S C E N E

CORIO LANUS.

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S C E N E II.

TULLUS *alone.*

Galesus said that *Marcus* stands for Consul.
O favour thou his suit, propitious *Jove* !
That I may brave him at his Army's Head,
In all the Majesty of sovereign Pow'r !
That the whole Conduct of the War may rest
On us alone, and prove by its Decision,
Which of the two is worthiest to command—

S C E N E III.

TULLUS, OFFICER.

Tul. Ha ! why this Haste ? you look alarm'd.

Off. My Lord,
One of exalted Port, his Visage hid,
Has plac'd himself upon your sacred Hearth,
Beneath the dread Protection of your *Lares* ;
And sits majestic there in solemn Silence.

Tul. Did you not ask him who, and what he was ?

Off. My Lord, I could not speak ; I felt appall'd,
As if the Presence of some God had struck me.

Tul. Come, Dastard ! let me find this Man of Terrors.

S C E N E IV.

The back Scene opens, and discovers Coriolanus as described above.

CORIO LANUS, TULLUS.

Tullus, *after some Silence.*

Illustrious Stranger—for thy high Demeanor
Bespeaks thee such—who art thou ?

Cor. [Rising and unmuffling his Face,
View me, *Tullus*— [After some pause.
Dost thou not know me ?

Tul.

Tul. No. That noble Front
I never saw before. What is thy Name?

Cor. Does not the secret Voice of hostile Instinct,
Does not thy swelling Heart declare me to thee?

Tul. Gods! can it be?—

Cor. Yes. I am *Caius Marcius*;
Known to thy smarting Country by the Name
Of *Coriolanus*. That alone is left me,
That empty Name, for all my Toils, my Service,
The Blood which I have shed for thankless *Rome*.
Behold me banish'd thence, a Victim yielded
By her weak Nobles to the maddening Rabble.
I seek Revenge. Thou may'st employ my Sword,
With keener Edge, with heavier Force against her,
Than e'er it fell upon the *Volscian* Nation.
But if thou, *Tullus*, dost refuse me this,
The only Wish of my collected Heart.
Where every Passion in one burning Point
Concenters give me Death: Death from thy Hand
I sure have well deserv'd—Nor shall I blush
To take or Life or Death from *Attius Tullus*.

Tul. O *Caius Marcius*! in this one short Moment,
That we have friendly talk'd, my ravish'd Heart
Has undergone a great, a wonderous Change.
I ever held thee in my best Esteem;
But this Heroic Confidence has won me,
Stamp't me at once thy Friend. I were indeed
A Wretch as mean as this thy Trust is noble,
Could I refuse thee thy Demand—Yes, *Marcius*!
Thou hast thy Wish! take half of my Command:
If that be not enough, then take the whole.
We have, my Friend, a gallant Force on Foot,
An Army, *Marcius*, fit to follow thee.
Go, lead them on, and take thy full Revenge.
All should unite to punish the ungrateful.
Ingratitude is Treason to Mankind.

Cor. (*embracing him.*) Thus, generous *Tullus*, take a
Soldier's Thanks,

Who is not practis'd in the Gloss of Words—

Thou Friend indeed! Friend to my Cause, my Quarrel!
Friend

Friend to the darling Passion of my Soul !
 All else I set at nought !—Immortal Gods !
 I am new-made, and wonder at myself !
 A little while ago, and I was nothing ;
 A powerless Reptile, crawling on the Earth,
 Curs'd with a Soul that restless wish'd to wield
 The bolts of *Jove* ! I dwelt in *Erebus*,
 I wander'd through the hopeless Glooms of Hell,
 Stung with Revenge, tormented by the Furies !
 Now, *Tullus*, like a God, you draw me thence,
 Throne me amidst the Skies, with Tempest charg'd,
 And put the ready Thunder in my Hand !

Tul. What I have promis'd, *Marcus*, I will do.
 Within an Hour at farthest we expect
 The Freedman of *Gaius* back from *Rome*,
 Who carry'd to the Senate our Demands.
 Their Answer will, I doubt not, end the Truce,
 And instant draw our angry Swords against them.
 Till then retire within my inmost tent,
 Unknown to all but me, that when our Chiefs
 Meet in full Council to declare for War,
 I may produce thee to their wondering Eyes,
 As if descended from avenging Heaven
 To humble lofty *Rome*, and teach her Justice.

Cor. To thy Direction, *Tullus*, I resign
 My future Life : my Fate is in thy Hands ;
 And if I judge aright, the Fate of *Rome*.

A C T

ACT II.

SCENE I.

GALESUS, TITUS.

GALESUS.

INdeed ! my *Titus*, I had Hopes that *Rome*,
 Vext as she is with her domestic Broils,
 Her Frontier weak, her Armies unprepar'd,
 Might have comply'd with our Demands, and given us,
 The same Alliance granted to the *Latines*.

Tit. The Senate scarce would hear the Terms I offer'd ;

But order'd me to bear this Answer back :

“ If first the *Volsi* take up Arms, the *Romans*

“ Will be the last to lay them down.”

Gal. Alas !

This Answer seals the Doom of many a Wretch.

Unchain'd *Bellona* from her Temple rushes,

With all the Crimes and Vices in her Train.

Earth fades at her Approach. To rural Peace,

Fair Plenty, and the social Joy of Cities,

Soon will succeed Rage, Rapine, Devastation,

Each cruel Horror sanctify'd by Names.

O Mortals ! Mortals ! when will you, content

With Nature's Bounty, that in fuller Flow,

Still as your Labours open more its Sources,

Abundant gushes o'er the happy World ;

When will you banish Violence, and Outrage,

To dwell with Beasts of Prey in Woods and Desarts ?

Tit. Never till *Rome* shall change her conquering
 Maxims.

Gal.

Gal. Her haughty Spirit now will soar beyond
Its usual Pitch, upborne by *Caius Marcius*.
Stands he not for the Consulate?

Tit. He did.

But is no more a Citizen of *Rome*.

Gal. What mean'st thou, *Titus*?

Tit. *Marcius* is from *Rome*

Banish'd for ever.

Gal. O immortal Powers!

On what Pretence could they to Exile doom
Their wisest Captain, and their bravest Soldier?
Nor less renown'd for Piety, for Justice,
And uncorrupted Heart, and purest Manners.

Tit. The Charge against him was intirely ground-
less,

What not his Enemies themselves believ'd,
Affecting of tyrannic Power in *Rome*.
His real Crime was only some hot Words,
Struck from his fiery Temper, in the Senate,
Against those factious Ministers of Discord,
The Tribunes of the People. They to Rage,
And frantic Fury, rous'd the mad Plebeians;
By whom supported in their bold Attempt,
They durst presume to summon to the Bar
Of an enrag'd and partial Populace,
The most illustrious Senator of *Rome*.
To this the Nobles yielded—and, with his,
Gave up their own and Children's Rights for ever.

Gal. O shameful Weakness in a *Roman* Senate,
So much renown'd for Firmness! Yet my *Titus*,
Spite of my Love to *Marcius*, I must own it,
The vigorous Soil whence his Heroic Virtues
Luxuriant rise, if not with careful Hand
Severely weeded, teems with Imperfections.
His lofty Spirit brooks no Opposition.

His Rage, if once offended, knows no Bounds.
He deems Plebeians, with Patrician Blood
Compar'd, the Creatures of a lower Species,
Mere menial Hands by Nature meant to serve him.

Tit. It was this high Patrician Pride undid him.
The furious People triumph'd in his Ruin

As if they had expell'd another *Tarquin* :
While like a captive Train, the vanquish'd Nobles
Hung their dejected Heads in silent Shame.

Marcus alone seem'd unconcern'd ; tho' deep
The latent Tempest boil'd within his Breast,
Choak'd up and smother'd with excessive Rage.

Gal. You were his Guest at *Rome*, and therefore
Titus,

Might on this sad Occasion be permitted
To join your Tears with his Domestic Friends.
Saw you that moving Scene ?

Tit. I did, *Gaius*.

I follow'd *Marcus* home—His Mother, there,
Veturia, the most venerable Matron
These Eyes have e'er beheld, and soft *Volumnia*,
His lovely, virtuous Wife, amidst his Children,
Spread on the Ground, lay lost in dumb Despair.

He swelling stood a while, and could not speak,
Th' affronted Hero struggling with the Man ;
Then thus at last he broke the gloomy Silence :

“ 'Tis done. The guilty Sentence is pronounc'd.

“ Ungrateful *Rome* has cast me from her Bosom.

“ Support this Blow with Fortitude and Courage,

“ As it becomes two generous *Roman* Matrons.

“ I recommend my Children to your Care.

“ Farewel. I go, I quit, without Regret,

“ A City grown an Enemy to Virtue.”

Gal. Oh godlike *Marcus* ! oh unconquer'd Strength
And Dignity of Mind ! How much superior
Is such a Soul to all the Power of Fortune !

Tit. This said, he sternly try'd to break away :
When, holding in her Hand his eldest Son,
Veturia follow'd ; while the poor *Volumnia*,
All drown'd in Tears, and bearing in one Arm
Their youngest, yet an Infant with the other
Hung clinging at his Knees—he turning to them,
Half soften'd, half severe, breath'd from his Soul
These broken Accents—“ Cease your vain Complaints.
“ Mother, you have no more a Son ; and thou,

“ Thou

"Thou best of Women! thou, my dear *Volumnia*!
 "No more a Husband"———Pierc'd with these dire
 Words,

Volumnia lifeless sunk: and off he flung,
 With wild Precipitation.

Gal. Thy sad Tale
 Blinds my old Eyes with Tears—But whither tell me,
 O whither, *Titus*, bent he then his Course?

Tit. Where the blind Genius of regardless Rage
 And Desperation led. On to the Gate,
Capena call'd, attended by the Nobles,
 He stalk'd in sullen Majesty along;
 Nor deign'd a Word. A godlike virtuous Anger
 Beam'd thro' his Features, and sublim'd his Air.
 With downcast Eyes he walk'd; or if aside
 He chanc'd to look, each Look, was great Reproach.
 Thus in emphatic Silence, that made Words
 Void and insipid all, he parted from them,
 The Day preceding my Return from *Rome*;
 Nor has been heard of since, lost in th' Abyss
 Of his own Woes.

Gal. O *Marcus*, noble *Marcus*!
 How shall my Friendship succour thy Distress?
 Where shall I find thee, to partake thy Sorrows,
 And make myself Companion of thy Exile?

But, *Titus*, we indulge Discourse too long—
 Go, and assemble thou the *Volscian* Chiefs,
 Whilst I repair to *Tullus*, to inform,
 And bring him to the Council, there to hear
 The fatal Answer thou hast brought from *Rome*.

S C E N E II.

Changes to TULLUS's Tent.

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS.

Cor. Forgive me, *Tullus*, if I count the Moments
 That stop the Purpose of thy noble Kindnets

And keep me here confin'd in tame Inaction.
Why lingers *Titus*?

Tul. Calm thy restless Heart,
Brave *Marcus*; every Minute I expect him.
Soon from the Cloud that hides thee, shalt thou break
With double Brightness; soon thy fiery Rage
Shall wither all the Strength and Pride of *Rome*.

Cor. O righteous *Jove*, Protector of the Injur'd!
If from my earliest Youth, with pious Awe,
I still have reverenc'd thy all-powerful Justice,
Still by her sacred Dictates rul'd my Actions,
O let that Justice now support my Cause,
And arm my strong Right-hand with all her Terrors!
When that is done, be Life or Death my Lot,
As thy almighty Pleasure shall determine.

Enter an Officer to Tullus.

Off. My Lord, *Galesus* asks Admittance to you.

Tul. *Marcus*, retire an Instant, till I hear
The Business brings him hither—Bid him enter.

[Exit Officer and Coriolanus.]

Enter GALESUS.

SCENE III.

TULLUS, GALESUS.

Gal. *Tullus*, the *Roman* Senate has return'd
No other Answer, to our late Demands,
But absolute Denial and Defiance.

Tul. It is what I expected—We shall teach them
An humbler Language soon—Hast thou assembled,
As I desir'd, the *Volscian* Chiefs in Council?

Gal. *Titus* is gone to summon their Attendance.

Tul. It is enough—Come forth, my noble Guest;
And shew *Galesus* how the Gods assist us.

S C E N E IV.

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS, GALESUS.

Gal. O My astonish'd Soul ! what do I see ?
 What ! *Caius Marcius* ! *Caius Marcius* here,
 Beneath one Tent with *Tullus* ?

Tul. Ay, and more,
 With *Tullus*, now his Friend and fellow Soldier.
 Yes, thou shalt see him thundering at the Head
 Of *Volscian* Armies ; he, who oft has carry'd
 Destruction thro' their Ranks—Your Leave a moment,
 While to our Chiefs, and Fathers, I announce
 Their unexpected Guest.

S C E N E V.

CORIOLANUS, GALESUS.

Cor. Thou good old Man !
 Close let me strain thee to my faithful Heart,
 Which now is doubly thine united more
 By the Protection which thy Country gives me,
 Than by our former Friendship.

Gal. Strange Event !
 This is thy Work, almighty Providence !
 Whose Power, beyond the Stretch of human Thought,
 Revolves the Orbs of Empire ; bids them sink
 Deep in the deadning Night of thy Displeasure,
 Or rise majestic o'er a wondering World.
 The Gods by thee—I see it, *Coriolanus*,—
 Mean to exalt us, and deprecate the *Romans*.

Cor. *Galesus*, yes, the Gods, have sent me hither ;
 Those righteous Gods, who, when vindictive Justice
 Excites them to destroy a worthless People,
 Make their own Crimes and Follies strike the Blow.

Gal. Cherish these Thoughts, that teach us what we
 are,
 And tame the Pride of Man. There is a Power,

Unseen that rules th' illimitable World,
 That guides its Motions, from the brightest Star,
 To the least Dust of this fin-tain'd Mold;
 While Man, who madly deems himself the Lord
 Of all, is nought but Weakness and Dependence,
 This sacred Truth, by sure Experience taught,
 Thou must have learnt, when, wandering all alone,
 Each Bird, each Insect, flitting thro' the Sky,
 Was more sufficient for itself, than thou ———
 Ah the full Image of thy Woes dissolves me!
 The Pangs thou must have torn, at parting from thee,
 Thy Mother and thy Wife. I cannot think
 Of that sad Scene without some Drops of Pity!

Cor. Who was it forc'd me to that bitter Parting?
 Who, in one cruel hasty Moment, chas'd me
 From Wife, from Children, Friends, and Household
 Gods,

Me! who so often had protected theirs?
 Who, from the sacred City of my Fathers
 Drove me with Nature's Commoners to dwell,
 To lodge beneath their wide unshelter'd Roof,
 And at their Table feed? O blast me, Gods!
 With ev'ry Woe! Debility of Mind,
 Dishonour, just Contempt, and palsy'd Weakness,
 If I forgive the Villains! yes, *Galeus*,
 Yes, I will offer to the Powers of Vengeance
 A great, a glorious Victim ——— a whole City! ———
 Why, *Tullus*, this Delay?

Gal. May *Coriolanus*

Be to the *Volscian* Nation, and himself,
 The dread, the godlike Instrument of Justice!
 But let not Rage and Vengeance mix their Rancour;
 Let them not trouble with their fretful Storm,
 Their angry Gleams, that Azure, where enthron'd
 The calm Divinity of Justice sits
 And pities, while she punishes Mankind.

Cor. What saidst thou? What, against the Powers of
 Vengeance?
 The Gods gave honest Anger, just Revenge,
 To be the awful Guardians of the Rights
 And native Dignity of Human kind.

O were it not for them, the faucy World
 Would grow a noisome Nest of lit le Tyrants !
 Each Carrion Crow, on Eagle Merit perch'd,
 Would peck his Eyes out, and the mungril Cur
 At pleasure bait the Lyon ——— No, *Galesus*,
 I would not rashly, nor on light Occasion,
 Receive the deep Impression in my Breast ;
 But when the Base, the Brutal and Unjust,
 Or worse than all, th' Ungrateful, stamp it there,
 O I will then with Luxury supreme,
 Enjoy the Pleasure of offended Gods,
 A righteous, just Revenge !——Behold my Soul.

Enter an Officer.

Off. My Lords, th' assembled Chiefs desire your Presence.

Gal. Come, noble *Marcus* ; let my joyful Hand
 Conduct thee thither——Doubt not thy Reception
 Will be proportion'd to thy Fame and Merit.

SCENE VI.

The back Scene opens, and discovers the Deputies of the Volscian States, assembled in Council. They rise and salute Coriolanus ; then resume their Places.

GALESUS, TULLUS, CORIOLANUS, SENATORS.

Gal. Assembled States, and Captains of the *Volsci*,
 Behold the Chief so much renown'd in War ;
 Our once so formidable Foe, but now
 Our proffer'd Friend and Soldier ——— *Caius Marcus*.

1st Sen. We give him hearty Welcome, from our Souls !

Cor. Most noble Chiefs, and Fathers of the *Volsci*,
 I need not say, how by the People's Rage,
 And the poor Weakness of the timid Nobles,
 I am expell'd from *Rome*. Had I confin'd
 My Wishes merely to a safe Retreat,
 Some *Latine* City might have given me that,
 Or any nameless Corner. What imports it,
 Where a tame patient Exile rots in Silence ?
 But, *Volscian* Lords, permit me to declare,
 I would at once cut short my useless Days,

Ra;

Rather than be that despicable Wretch,
 Who neither can take Vengeance on his Foes,
 Nor serve his Friends. That is my Temper, Chiefs.
 I shall be glad to merit, by my Sword,
 Th' Asylum which I seek among the *Volsci*.
Rome is our common Foe : Then let us join
 Our common Suffering, Passions, and Resentments.
 Yes, tho' but one, I bring so many Wrongs,
 So large a Share of powerful Enmity,
 Into the War, as gives me the Presumption,
 To offer to the *Volscian* States th' Alliance
 Even of my single Arm. —

Tul That single Arm

Is in itself a numerous Army, *Marcus* ;
 The *Volscians* so esteem it—— But proceed.

Cor. I will not mention, *Volscian* Chiefs, what Talent
 The World allows me to possess in War :
 But be it what it will, you may employ it.
 Soldier, or Captain, in whatever Station
 You place me, I will lose each Drop of Blood,
 Or with this Hand I'll fix the *Volscian* Standard
 On the proud Towers of *Capitolian Jove*.

Tul. Chiefs of the *Volscian* League, I give you Joy
 Of our new Citizen, the noble *Marcus*.
 The Genius of the *Volscian* State has sent him,
 Whetted by Wrongs into a keener hatred
 That that we bear to *Rome*. It were contemning,
 With impious self-sufficient Arrogance,
 This Bounty of the Gods, not to accept,
 With every Mark of Honour, of his Service.
 I, *Volscians*, I, even *Attius Tullus*, give,
 First of you all, my Voice, that *Caius Marcus*
 Be now receiv'd to high Command among us ;
 That instantly we do appoint him General
 Of half our Troops, which here, with your Consent,
 I to him yield. — Speak, Chiefs, is this your Pleasure ?

1st *Sen.* It is, — We give unanimous Consent.

Tul. (*embracing him.*) *Marcus*, I joy to call thee
 my Companion,
 And Collegue in this War.

Cor. By all the Gods !

Thou

Thou art the generous Victor of my Soul !

Yes, *Tullus*, I am conquer'd by thy Virtue.

Gal. Tho' I have oft, on great Occasions *Tullus*,
Beheld thee in the Senate, and the Field,
Cover'd with Glory ; yet, I must avow,
I never saw thee shew such genuine Greatness,
Such true Sublimity of Soul, as now.

To scorn th' all-powerful Charm of selfish Passions,
Chiefly the dazzling Pride of Emulation,
That noble Weakness of Heroic Minds,
To sink thyself that thou may'st raise thy Country ;
To put the Sword into thy Rival's Hand,
And twine thy promis'd Laurels round his Brow—
O 'tis a Flight beyond the highest Point
Of Martial Glory ! and what few can reach.
Go forth, the chosen Ministers of Justice ;
And may that awful Power, whose secret Hand
Sways all our Passions, turns our partial Views
All to its own dread Purposes, attend you !

Cor. I burn to enter on the glorious Task
You now have mark'd me out. How slow the Time
To the warm Soul, that in the very Instant
It forms, would execute, a great Design.
'Tis my advice we march direct to *Rome* ;
We cannot be too quick. Let the first Dawn
See us in bright Array before her Walls.
Perhaps when they behold their Exile there,
Back'd by your Force, some conscious Hearts among
them

May feel th' Alarm of Guilt.

Tul. I much approve
Of this Advice. 'Tis what I thought before,
Ere strengthen'd *Marcus*, by thy mighty Arm :
But now 'tis doubly right. Here, *Volsian* Chiefs,
Here let our Council terminate—The Troops
Have had Repose sufficient. Strait to *Rome*,
Come, let us urge our March—As yet the Stars
Ride in their middle Watch : we shall with Ease
Reach it by Dawn.—

Cor. Yes, we have time—too much !
Six tedious Hours till Morn—But hence ! away !
My Soul on Fire anticipates the Dawn.

A C T III.

S C E N E I.

CORIANUS, TULLUS, VOLUSIUS, TITUS, *with a Croud of Volscian Officers. Acclamations behind the Scenes.*

CORIANUS.

NO more—I merit not this lavish Praise.
True, we have driven the *Roman* Legions back,
Defeated and disgrac'd—But what is this?
Nothing, ye *Volsci*, nothing yet is done.
We but begin the wonderous Leaf of Story,
That marks the *Roman* Doom. At length it dawns,
The destin'd Hour, that eases of their Fears
The Nations round, and sets *Hesperia* free.
Come on, my brave Companions of the War!
Come, let us finish at one mighty Stroke,
This Toil of labouring Fate—We will, or perish!
While, noble *Tullus*, you protect the Camp,
I, with my Troops, all Men of chosen Valour,
And well-approv'd to-day, will storm the City.

Tit. Beneath thy animating Conduct, *Marcus*,
What can the *Volscian* Valour not perform.
Thy very Sight and Voice subdues the *Romans*.
When, lifting up your Helm, you shew'd your Face,
That like a Comet glar'd Destruction on them,
I saw their bravest Veterans fly before thee.
Their ancient Spirit has with thee forsook them,
And Ruin hangs o'er yon devoted Walls.

[Enter an Officer, who addresses himself to Coriolanus.

Offi. My Lord, a Herald is arriv'd from *Rome*
To say, a Deputation from the Senate,
Attended by the Ministers of Heaven,
A venerable Train of Priests and Flamens,
Is on the Way, address'd to you.

Cor. To me!

What can this Message mean!—Stand to your Arms,
Ye *Volscian* Troops, and let these *Romans* pass

Betwixt

CORIOLANUS.

25

Betwixt the lowring Frown of double Files.
What ! do they think me such a milky Boy,
To pay my Vengeance with a few soft Words.
Come, fellow Soldiers, *Tullus*, come, and see,
If I betray the Honours you have done me.

[*Goes out with a Train of Volscian Officers.*]

S C E N E II.

TULLUS, VOLUSIUS, *who remain.*

VOLUSIUS after some Silence,

Are we not *Tullus*, failing in our Duty
Not to attend our General ?

Tul. How ! What sayst thou ?

Vol. Methought my Lord his parting Orders were,
We should attend the Triumph now preparing
O'er all his Foes at once—*Romans* and *Volsci* !
Come, we shall give Offence.

Tul. Of this no more.

I pray thee spare thy bitter Irony:

Vol. Shall I then speak without Disguise ?

Tul. Speak out :

With all the honest Bluntness of a Friend.
Think'st thou I fear the Truth ?

Vol. Then, *Tullus*, know,

Thou art no more the General of the *Volsci*,
Thou hast, by this thy generous Weakness, sunk
Thyself into a private Man of *Antium*.
Yes, thou hast taken from thy laurel'd Brow
The well earn'd Trophies of thy Toils and Perils;
Thy springing Hopes, the fairest ever budded,
And heap'd them on a Man too proud before.

Tul. He bears it high.

Vol. Death, and Perdition ! high !

With uncontroul'd Command !—You see, already,
He will not be encumber'd with the Fetters
Of our Advice. He speaks his Sov'reign Will ;
On every Hand he issues out his Orders,
As to his natural Slaves.—For you, my Lord,

C

He has, I think confin'd you to your Camp,
There in inglorious Indolence to languish;
While he, beneath your blasted Eye, shall reap
The Harvest of your Honour.

Tul. No, *Volufius*,

Whatever Honour shall by him be gain'd
Reverts to me, from whose superior Bounty
He drew the Means of all his glorious Deeds.
This mighty Chief, this Conqueror of *Rome*
Is but my Creature.—

Vol. Wretched Self-Delusion;

He and the *Volscians* know he is thy Master.
He acts as such in all Things—Now, by *Mars*,
Could my abhorrent Soul endure the Thought
Of stooping to a *Roman* Chief, I here
Would leave thee in thy solitary Camp,
And go where Glory calls.

Tul. Indeed, *Volufius*,

I did expect more equal Treatment from him.
But what of that?—The generous Pride of Virtue
Disdains to weigh too nicely the Returns
Her Bounty meets with—Like the lib'ral Gods,
From her own gracious Nature she bestows,
Nor stoops to ask Reward—Yet must I own,
I thought he would not have so soon forgot
What he so lately was, and what I am.

Vol. Gods! knew ye not his Character before?

Did you not know his Genius was to yours

Averse, as are Antipathies in Nature?

High, over-weening, tyrannously Proud,

And only fit to hold Command o'er Slaves?

Hence, as repugnant to that equal Life,

Which is the quickening Soul of all Republics,

The *Roman* People cast him forth; and we,

Shall we receive the Bane of their Repose,

In our Breast? are we less free than they?

Or shall we be more patient of a Tyrant?

Tul. All this I knew. But while his Imperfections
Are thy glad Theme, thou hast forgot his Virtues.

Vol. I leave that Subject to the smooth *Galeus*,
And these his *Volscian* Flatterers—His Virtues!

Trust

Trust me there is no Insolence that treads
So high as that which rears itself on Virtue.

Tul. Well, be it so—I meant, that even his Vices
Should, on this great Occasion, serve the *Volsci*.

Vol. Confusion! there it is! there lurks the Sting
Of our Dishonour! while this *Marcus* leads
The *Roman* Armies, ours are driven before him.
Behold he changes Sides; when with him changes
The Fortune of the War. Strait they grow *Volsci*
And we victorious *Romans*—Such, no doubt,
Such is his secret Boast—Ay, this vile Brand,
Success itself will fix for ever on us;
And, *Tullus*, thou, 'tis thou must answer for it.

Tul. [*aside*.] His Words are Daggers to my Heart; I
feel

Their Truth, but am ashamed to own my Folly.

Vol. O Shame! O Infamy! the Thought consumes me,
It scalds my Eyes with Tears, to see a *Roman*
Borne on our Shoulders to immortal Fame:
Just in the happy Moment that decided
The long Dispute of Ages, that for which
Our generous Ancestors had toil'd and bled,
To see him then step in and steal our Glory!
O that we first had perish'd all! A People,
Who cannot find in their own proper Force
Their own Protection, are not worth the saving!

Tul. It must have Way! I will no more suppress it—

Know, then, my rough old Friend, no less than thee
His Conduct hurts me, and upbraids my Folly.
I wake as from a Dream. What Demon mov'd me?
What doating Generosity? his Woes,
Was it his Woes! to see the brave reduc'd
To trust his mortal Foe? perhaps, a little
That work'd within my Bosom——But, *Volusius*,
That was not all—I will to thee confess
The Weakness of my Heart—Yes, it was Pride,
The dazzling Pride to see my Rival-Warriour
The great *Coriolanus*, bend his Soul,
His haughty Soul, to sue for my Protection.

Protection said I? were it that alone,
 I had been base to have refus'd him that,
 To have refus'd him aught a gallant Foe
 Owes to a gallant Foe.——But to exalt him
 To the same Level, nay above myself;
 To yield him the Command of half my Troops,
 The choicest acting Half—That, that was Madness!
 Was weak, was mean, unworthy of a Man!——

Vol. I scorn to flatter thee—It was indeed.

Tul. Curse on the Slave *Gaius*! soothing, he
 Seiz'd the fond Moment of Infatuation,
 And clinch'd the Chains my generous Folly forg'd,
 How shall I from this Labyrinth escape?
 Must it then be! what cruel Genius dooms me,
 In War or Peace to creep beneath his Fortune?

Vol. That Genius is thyself. If thou can'st bear
 The very Thought of stooping to this *Roman*,
 Thou from that Moment art his Vassal, *Tullus*;
 By that thou dost acknowledge, Parent Nature
 Has form'd him thy Superior. But if fix'd
 Upon the Base of manly Resolution,
 Thou say'st—I will be free! I will command!
 I and my Country! then—O never doubt it——
 We shall find Means to crush this vain Intruder;
 Even I myself——this Hand——

Nay, hear me, *Tullus*,

'Tis not yet come to that, that last Resource.
 I do not say we should employ the Dagger,
 While other better Means are in our Power.

Tul. No, my *Volusius*, Fortune will not drive us,
 Or I am much deceiv'd, to that Extreme:
 We shall not want the strongest fairest Plea,
 To give a solemn Sanction to his Fate.
 He will betray himself. Whate'er his Rage
 Of Passion talks, a Weakness for his Country
 Sticks in his Soul, and he is still a *Roman*.
 Soon shall we see him tempted to the Brink
 Of this sure Precipice—Then down at once,
 Without Remorse, we hurl him to Perdition!—

But

But hark ! the Trumpet calls us to a Scene
 I should detest, if not from Hope we thence
 May gather Matter to mature our Purpose.

SCENE III.

The back Scene opens, and discovers Coriolanus sitting on his Tribunal, attended by his Liētors, and a Croud of Volscian Officers. Files of Troops drawn up on either Hand. In the Depth of the Scene appear the Deputies from the Roman Senate, M. Minucius, Posthumus Cominius, Sp. Lartius, P. Pinnarius, and Q. Sulpitius, all Consular Senators, who had been his most zealous Friends. And behind them march the Priests, the Sacrificers, the Augurs, and the Guardians of the sacred Things, drest in their Ceremonial Habits. These advance slowly betwixt the Files of Soldiers, under Arms. As Tullus enters, Coriolanus rising salutes him.

Cor. Here, noble Tullus, sit, and judge my Conduct
 Nor spare to check me if I act amiss.

Tul. Marcius, the Volscian Fate is in thy Hands.

[Coriolanus is seated again, and Tullus places himself upon a Tribunal on his left Hand. Mean time the Roman Deputies advance up to Coriolanus and salute him, which he returns.]

Cor. What, Romans, from the Generals of the Volsci
 Is you Demand ?

Min. O Coriolanus, Rome,
 Nurse of thy tender Years, thy Parent-City,
 Her Senators, her People, Priests, and Augurs,
 Her every Order and Degree, by us,
 Thy ever-zealous, still-unshaken Friends,
 Sue in the most pathetic Terms for Peace.
 And if in This, constrain'd, We from our Maxims
 Never to ask but give it, must depart ;
 It is some Consolation, in the State
 To which thou hast by thy superior Valour
 Reduc'd us, that we ask it from a Roman.

Cor. I was a Roman once, and thought the Name
 C 3 Was

Was not dishonour'd by me ; but it pleas'd
Your Lords, the Mob of *Rome*, to take it from me ;
Nor will I now receive it back again.

Min. The Name thou may'st reject, but canst not throw
'The Duties from thee which that Name imports ;
Indissoluble Duties, bound upon thee
By the strong Hand of Nature, and confirm'd
By the dread Sanction of all-ruling *Jove*.
'Then hear thy Country's supplicating Voice ;
By all those Duties I conjure thee hear us.

Cor. Well—I will hear thee ; speak, declare thy
Message.

Min. Give Peace, give healing Peace, to two brave
Nations,

Fatigu'd with War, and sick of cruel Deeds !
'To carry on Destruction's easy Trade,
Afflict Mankind, and scourge the World with War,
Is what each wicked, each ambitious Man,
Who lets his furious Passions loose, may do :
But in the flattering Torrent of Success,
'To check his Rage, and drop th' avenging Sword,
When a repenting People ask it of him,
That is the genuine Bounty of a God.
Then urge no further this your just Repentment ;
Which, injur'd as you are, you needs must feel,
But never ought to carry into Action,
Against your sacred Country, whence you drew
Your Life, your Virtues, every mortal Good,
'That very Valour you employ against her.
Stop, *Coriolanus*, ere, beyond Retreat,
You plunge yourself in Crimes. To the fierce Joy
Of Vengeance push'd to barbarous Excess,
Repentance will succeed, and sickning Horror.
Consider too the slippery State of Fortune.
The Gods take Pleasure oft, when haughty Mortals
On their own Pride erect a mighty Fabrick,
By slightest means, to lay their tow'ring Schemes
Low in the Dust, and teach them they are nothing.
Return, thou virtuous *Roman* ! to the Bosom
Of thy imploring Country. Low ! her Arms
She fondly spreads to take thee back again,

And

And by redoubled Love efface her Harshness.
Return, and crown thee with the noblest Wreath,
Which Glory can bestow—the Palm of Mercy!

Cor. Marcus Minucius, and ye other *Romans*,
Respected Senators, and holy Flamens,
Attend, and take to your Demand this Answer:

Why court you me, the Servant of the *Volsci*?
It is to them that you must bend for Peace,
Which on these only Terms they will accord you.
“Restore the conquer’d Lands, your former Wars
“Have ravish’d from them: from their Towns and
Cities,

“Won by your Arms, withdraw your Colonies;

“And to the full Immunities of *Rome*

“Frankly admit them, as you have the *Latines*.”

Then, *Romans*, you have Peace, and not till then!

If these are Terms which suit not your Ambition,

They suit the State to which the *Volscian* Arms

Have now reduc’d you—We have learn’d from *Rome*

To use our Fortune, and command the Vanquish’d.

Tul. (aside) Death to my Hopes! I’m now his Slave
for ever.

Cor. [addressing himself to the Volsci.] This, my
illustrious Patrons and Protectors,
Volsci, to you I ow’d. Permit me now
To do myself and injur’d Honour Justice.

[Turning again to the Romans.]

As to the Liberty you idly vaunt

To give me of returning to your City,

’Tis what I hold unworthy of Acceptance.

Can I return into th’ ungrateful Bosom

Of a distracted State, where, to the Rage

Of a vile senseless Populace, the Laws

Are by your shameful Weakness giv’n a Prey?

Who are the Men that hold the Sway among you?

And whom have you expell’d, as even unworthy

To live within the Cincture of your Walls!—

O the wild Thought breaks in and troubles Reason!—

With what ye *Romans*, can the sowerest Censor,

The most envenom’d Malice justly charge me?

Did I e'er break your Laws ? Nay, did I e'er
 Do aught that could disturb the sacred Order,
 The Peace and social Harmony of Life ;
 Or taint your ancient Sanctity of Manners ?
 What was my Crime ? I could not bear to see
 Your Dignity debas'd : to see the Rabble,
 Tread on the reverend grey Authority
 Of Senatorial Wisdom : Yes, for you,
 In your Defence I did enrage this Monster ;
 And yet you basely left me to its Fury.
 Then talk no more of Services and Friendship :
 A Friend, who can, and does not shield, betrays me.
 Or if the Power was wanting, then your Senate
 Is sunk into Servility, and Bondage,
 Nor should a Freeman deign to sit among you.

Min. The Wisest are sometimes compell'd to yield
 To popular Storms : Yet I defend not, *Marcus*,
 Our timid Conduct ; we have felt our Error,
 And now invite thee back to aid the Senate,
 With thy heroic Spirit to restrain
 The giddy rage of Faction, and to hold
 The Reins of Government more firm hereafter.

As to th' Appeal which thou hast nobly made
 In vindication of thy spotless Fame,
 With Pleasure we confirm it, and bear Witness
 To all thy public and thy private Virtues :
 But let us also beg thee not to stain
 The Brightness of that Glory by a Crime,
 Which, unrepented. would disgrace them all,
 A dire rebellious War against thy Country.

Cor. Absurd ! What can you mean ? To call a People,
 Who with the last Indignity have us'd me,
 To call my Foes my Country ! No, *Minucius*,
 It is the generous Nation of the *Volsi*,
 These brave, these virtuous Men, you see around me,
 Who, when I wander'd a poor helpless Exile,
 Took Pity of my Injuries and Woes ;
 Forgot the former Mischiefs of my Sword ;
 Heap'd on me Kindness, Honours, Dignities ;
 Fear'd not to trust me with this high Command,

And

And plac'd me here the Guardian of their Cause:—
Be Witnesses, *Jove*!—It is alone their Nation
I henceforth will acknowledge for my Country!
Let this suffice—You have my Answer, *Romans*.

Com. This Answer, *Coriolanus*, is the Dictate
More of thy Pride than Magnanimity:
'Tis thy Revenge that gives it, not thy Virtue.
Art thou above the Gods? who joy to show'r
Their doubled Goodness on repenting Mortals?
But think not I intend, by This, to urge
Our proffer'd Peace, so harshly treated, further.
That were a Weakness ill becoming *Romans*.
Yet I must tell thee, it would better suit
A fierce despotic Chief of barbarous Slaves,
Than the calm Dignity of one who sits
In the grave Senate of a free Republic,
To talk so high, and as it were to thrust
Plebeians from the native Rights of Man.—

Cor. Ha! dost thou come the People's Advocate
To Me, *Cominius*! Com'st thou to insult me!

Com. Nay, hear me, *Marcus*:—These grey Hairs
impower me
To set thee right before this great Assembly:
And there was once a Time thou would'st have heard
Thy General with more Deference and Patience.—
I tell thee then, whoe'er amidst the Sons
Of Reason, Valour, Liberty, and Virtue,
Displays distinguish'd Merit, is a Noble
Of Nature's own creating. Such have risen
Sprung from the Dust, or where had been our Ho-
nours?

And such in radiant Bands will rise again,
In yon immortal City, that, when most
Deprest by Fate, and near apparent Ruin,
Returns, as with an Energy divine,
On her astonish'd Foes, and shakes them from her—
Your Pardon, *Volsi*—But This, *Coriolanus*,
Is what I had to say.

Cor.

Cor. And I have heard it ---

[*Rising from his Tribunal; and the Priests
advancing to address him, he prevents them.*]

For you, ye awful Ministers of Heav'n,
Let me not hear your holy Lips profan'd
By urging what my Duty must refuse.
I bow in Adoration to the Gods;
I venerate their Servants. But there is,
There is a Power, their chief, their darling Care,
The Guardian of Mankind, which to betray
Were violating all --- And that is *Justice*.

So far my public Character demands;
So far my Honour. --- Now, what should forbid
The Man, and Friend, to be indulg'd a little?

Permit me to embrace thee, good *Minucius*;
Thee *Lartius*; you, *Pinnarius* and *Sulpicius*;
But chiefly thee, *Ceminius*, who first rais'd me
To Deeds of Arms; who from thy Consular Brow
Took thy own Crown, and with it circled mine.
Tho' nought can shake my Purpose, yet I wish
That *Rome* had sent me others on this Errand.
I thank you for your Friendship. The Protection
Which you have given to those, whom once I call'd
By tender Names, I would not now remember.
How shall I --- say --- return your generous Goodness?
O there is nothing, you as Friends can ask,
My grateful Heart will not with Pleasure grant you.

Com. We thank thee, *Coriolanus* --- But a *Roman*
Disdains that Favour you refuse his Country.

Cor. (*To the Volscian Officers.*) See that they be, with
due Regard and Safety,
Conducted back.

I will suspend th' Assault, [*To the Roman Senators.*]
Till to these Terms, of which we will not bate
The smallest Part, your Senate may have time
To send their latest Answer. Then we cut
All further Treaty off. *Romans* farewell.

A C T IV.

S C E N E I.

TULLUS *alone.*

W H A T is the Mind of Man? A restless Scene
 Of Vanity and Weakness; shifting still,
 As shift the Lights of our uncertain Knowledge;
 Or as the various Gale of Passion breathes.

None ever thought himself more deeply founded
 On what is right, nor felt a nobler Ardor,
 Than I, when I invested *Caius Marcius*
 With this ill-judg'd Command. Now it appears
 Distraction, Folly, monstrous Folly! Meanness!
 And down I plunge, betray'd even by my Virtue,
 From Gulph to Gulph, from Shame to deeper Shame.

S C E N E II.

TULLUS, GALEUS.

Gal. I listen'd, *Tullus*, to th'important Scene
 That lately pass'd before us with most strict
 Unprejudic'd Attention; and have since
 Revolv'd it in my Mind, both as a Man,
 Ally'd to all Mankind, and as a *Volscian*.
 Indeed our Terms are high, and by the Manner
 In which they were prescribed by *Coriolanus*,
 Are what we cannot hope will e'er be granted.
 They should be soften'd. Let us yield a little,
 Conscious ourselves to a great Nation's Pride,
 The Pride of human Nature. Could the *Romans*
 Stoop to such Peace, commanded by the Sword,
 They then were Slaves, unworthy our Alliance.

Tul. Gods! do I hear in thee, one of the Chiefs
 Intrusted with the Honour of the *Volsci*,
 An Advocate for *Rome*?

Gal.

Gal. I glory, *Tullus*,
To own myself an Advocate for Peace.
Peace is the happy natural State of Man ;
War his Corruption, his Disgrace—

Tul. His Safeguard !
His Pride ! his Glory !—What but War, just War,
Gave *Greece* her Heroes ? Those who drew the Sword
(As we do now) against the Sons of Rapine ;
To quell proud Tyrants, and to free Mankind.

Gal. Yes, *Tullus*, when to just Defence the Warrior
Confines his Force, he is a worshipp'd Name,
Dear to Mankind, the first and best of Mortals !
Yet still, if this can by soft Means be done,
And fair Accommodation, that is better.
Why should we purchase with the Blood of thousands,
What may be gain'd by mutual just Concession ?
Why give up Peace, the best of human Blessings,
For the vain cruel Pride of useless Conquest ?

Tul. These soothing Dreams of philosophic Quiet
Are only fit for unfrequented Shades.
The Sage should quit the busy bustling World
Ill suited to his gentle Meditations,
And in some Desert find that Peace he loves.

Gal. Mistaken Man ! Philosophy consists not
In airy Schemes, or idle Speculations :
The Rule and Conduct of all social Life
Is her great Province. Not in lonely Cells
Obscure she lurks, but holds her heavenly Lights
To Senates and to Kings, to guide their Councils,
And teach them to reform and bless Mankind.
All Policy but her's is false and rotten ;
All Valour not conducted by her Precepts
Is a destroying Fury sent from Hell
To plague unhappy Man, and ruin Nations.

Tul. To stop the Waste of that destroying Fury,
Is the great Cause and Purpose of this War.
Art thou a Friend to Peace ?—subdue the *Romans*.
Who, who, but they have turn'd this antient Land,
Where from *Saturnian* Times, harmonious Concord
Still lov'd to dwell, into a Scene of Blood,

Of endless Discord, and perpetual Rapine?
 The Sword, the vengeful Sword, must drain away
 This boiling Blood, that thus disturbs the Nations!
 Talk not of Terms. It is a vain Attempt
 To bind th' Ambitious and Unjust by Treaties:
 These they allude a thousand specious Ways;
 Or if they cannot find a fair Pretext,
 They blush not in the Face of Heaven to break them.

Gal. Why then affronted Heaven will combat for us,
 Set Justice on our Side, and then my Voice
 Shall be as loud for War as thine; my Sword
 Shall strike as deep; at least my Blood shall flow
 As freely, *Tullus*, in my Country's Cause.
 But as I then would die to serve the *Volsicians*,
 So now I dare to serve them by opposing,
 Even with my single Voice, th' impetuous Torrent
 That hurries us away beyond the Bounds
 Of temperate Wisdom; and presume to tell thee,
 It is thy Passion, not thy Prudence dictates
 This haughty Language.

Tul. Yes, it is my Passion,
 A Passion for the Glory of my Country,
 That scorns your narrow Views of timid Prudence.
 Our injur'd Honour drew our Swords, and never
 Shall they be sheath'd while I command the *Volsicians*,
 Till *Rome* submits to *Antium*.—

Gal. *Rome* will perish
 Ere she submit; and she has still her Walls,
 The Strength of her Allies, her native Valour,
 Which oft has sav'd her in the worst Extremes,
 And, stronger yet than all, Despair to aid her.

Tul. All these will nought avail her, if our Fears
 Come not to her Assistance—But, *Galesus*,
 Why urge you this to me? Go, talk to *Marcus*.
 The War has given him all his Pride could hope for,
 To see *Rome's* Senate humbled at his Feet:
 He now may wish to reign in Peace at *Antium*,
 And thou, perhaps, art come an Envoy from him,
 To learn if I shall prove a quiet Subject.

Gal.

Gal. Thro' this unguarded Opening of thy Soul,
I see what stings thee—Ah ! beware of Envy !

If that pale Fury seize thee, thou art lost !

Tullus, 'tis easier far, from the clear Breast,
To keep out treacherous Vice, than to expel it.
Farewel. Remember I have done my Duty.

[*Goes out.*

Tul. (alone.) This Man discerns my Heart —Well :
What of that ?

Am I afraid its Movements should be seen ?

I, whose clear Thoughts have never shunn'd the Light,
Must I now seek to hide them ? O Misfortune !

To have reduc'd myself to such a State,
So much beneath the Greatness of my Soul,
That, like a Coward, I must learn to practise
The wretched Arts of vile Dissimulation !

By Heav'n I will not do't—I will not stoop
To veil my Discontent a Moment longer.

But see ! my Rival comes the happy *Marcus*
His haughty Mein, his very Looks, affront me.

S C E N E III.

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS.

Cor. Tullus, I have receiv'd Intelligence,
That a strong Body of the *Latin* Troops
Is in full March to raise the Siege of *Rome*.
Another Day will bring them to its Aid.
But go thou forth, and lead the valiant Bands,
By thee commanded, to repel these Succours.
Go, and cut off from *Rome* its last Resource.

Tul. I lead my Troops, from the great Scence of
Action,

From falling *Rome*, which, ere To-morrow's Sun
Shall set, may be our Prey ! Sure you forget
My Rank and Station—I disdain the Service :
Give it to some you may command. For me,
I own no Master but the *Volscian* States.
Rome is my Object. I from *Antium* brought
The noblest Army ever shook her Walls.

And

And shall I now, on that decisive Day,
 Doom'd by the Gods to lay her Pride in Ashes,
 Shall I be absent from the glorious Work?
 It is the highest Outrage even to think it ———
 Just Gods! Dost thou presume to give thy Orders
 To me? to me! thy Equal in Command?
 Nay, thy Superior? Was it not my Hand,
 My lavish Hand, bestow'd thy Power upon thee?
 And know, proud *Roman*, that the Man who gave it,
 Can at his Will resume it.

Cor. I propos'd

This Expedition to thee as thy Friend,
 Not as thy General, *Tullus*. We are both
 Commanders here; and for my Share of Pow'r,
 Whene'er the Council of the *Volsian* States,
 Who cloath'd me with it, shall again demand it,
 I at their Feet will lay it down, persuaded,
 The canker'd Tongue of Envy's Self must own,
 That by my Service I have well deserv'd it.

Tul. Was it to Them, or Me, you hither came
 To crave Protection? Was not then your Fortune,
 Your Liberty, your Life, at my Disposál?
 I rais'd you from the Dust, a wretched Exile,
 An Outcast, helpless, friendless, driven to beg
 The lowest Refuge which Despair can seek,
 Shelter amidst thy Foes. My pitying Goodness
 Protected, trusted, and believ'd you grateful.
 O ill plac'd Confidence!—

Cor. Immortal Gods!

Hear I these Words from *Tullus*!

Tul. What for all this

Is thy Return? Pride; Self-sufficiency;
 Councils apart from mine; despotic Orders;
 The Glory of the War all pilfer'd from me:
 And, to complete the Whole, a *Latin* Army
 Now conjur'd up to draw me from the Siege;
 Till by cajoling our tame Chiefs, and dazling
 The senseless Eyes of the low Mob of Soldiers,
 Thou shalt be solely seated in the Power
 Which, thank my Folly! now is shar'd betwixt us.

Cor.

Cor. O Indignation!—Down thou swelling Heart—
 I will be calm—I will.—Thou dost accuse me
 Of the worst Vice that can debase Mankind,
 Of black Ingratitude. On what Foundations?
 What have I done to merit such a Charge?
 Is it my Fault, if in the *Volscian* Army
 My Name is as rever'd and great as thine?
 Can I forbid Authority, and Fame,
 To follow Merit and Success?—You knew
 The Man whom you employ'd, and should have known,
 He would not be a Cypher in Employment.

Tul. Think'st thou my Heart can better brook than
 thine
 To be that Cypher! that dishonour'd Tool!
 Subservient to th' Ambition of another?
 Gods! I had rather live a drudging Peasant,
 Unknown to Glory, in some *Alpine* Village;
 Than, at the Head of these victorious Legions,
 Bear the high Name of Chief, without the Power.
 No, *Marcus*, no. I will command indeed:
 And thou shalt learn with all the *Volscian* Army,
 To treat their General with Respect.

Cor. Respect!
 O *Tullus*! *Tullus*! by the Powers divine!
 I bore thee once Respect, as high as Man
 Can shew to Man. From thee, my Foe, my Rival,
 I nor disdain'd nor fear'd to ask Protection.
 You gave me all I ask'd, you gave me more,
 With noble Warmth of Heart! which, to Esteem,
 Added the Ties of Gratitude, and Friendship,
 Whatever since, in Council, or in Arms,
 Has been by me atchiev'd, was done for thee.
 My Glory all was thine. The Palms I gain'd
 Only compos'd a Garland for his Brow,
 Who rais'd this banish'd Man to tread on *Rome*.

Tul. To tread on him who rais'd him—That, I
 know,
 Is thy ambitious Purpose; but be certain,
 However *Rome* may bend beneath thy Fortune,
 Thou shalt not find an easy Conquest here.

Cor.

Cor. May *Jove* with Lightning strike me to the Centre

If from the Day I saw thy Face at *Antium*,
My Heart has ever form'd one secret Thought
To hurt thy Honour, or depress thy Greatness :
I was thy Friend, thy Soldier, and thy Servant.
But now I will as openly avow,
Thy Jealousy has, with envenom'd Breath,
Made such a sudden Ravage in our Friendship,
I know not what to think.—

Tul. Think me thy Foe.

There is no lasting Friendship with the Proud.

Cor. Nor with the Jealous—But of this enough.
Come, let us turn our Fire a nobler Way :
We have a worthier Quarrel to pursue. —
It were unjust, dishonourable, base,
Our Pride should hurt the *Volscian* Cause.

Tul. No, *Marcus*.

I mean to guard it better for the future :
'The *Volscian* Cause is safest with a *Volscian*.
I therefore claim, insist upon my Right ;
'That you shall yield me my Command in Turn.
'The first Attack was yours : 'Tis scanty Justice,
'The second should be mine.

Cor. *Tullus*, 'tis yours,
O it imports not which of us command !
Give me the lowest Rank among your Troops :
All *Italy* will know, the Voice of Fame
Will tell all future Times, that I was present
'That *Coriolanus* in the *Volscian* Army
Assisted, when Imperial *Rome* was sack'd ;
'That City which, while he maintain'd her Cause,
Invincible herself, made *Antium* tremble.

Tul. What arrogant Presumption !

S C E N E IV.

To them VOLUSIUS, entering hastily.

Tul. Ha ! *Volusius*,

Thy Looks declare some Message of Importance.

Vol. *Tullus*, they do—I was to find thee, *Marcus*.

To thee a second Deputation comes,

Thy Mother, and thy Wife, with a long Train

Of all the noblest Ladies *Rome* can boast,

In mourning Habits clad, approach our Camp,

Preceded by a Herald, to demand

Another Audience of Thee.

Cor. How *Volusius* !

Said you, the *Roman* Ladies ! Low, indeed,

Must be the State of *Rome*, when thus her Matrons

She sends amidst the Tumults of a Camp,

To beg Protection for the Men, who lie

Trembling behind their Ramparts—Come ! once more !

And see me put an-End to Prayers and Treaty !

S C E N E V.

TULLUS, VOLUSIUS.

Vol. *Tullus*, 'tis well. This answers to my Wishes.

Tul. How ? What is well ? That humbled *Rome* once more

Shall deck him with the Trophies of our Arms ?

Vol. And hop'st thou nothing from this blest Event ?

They who have often blasted mighty Heroes,

Who oft have stoln into the firmest Hearts,

And melted them to Folly ; They, my Friend,

Will do what Wisdom never could effect.

Tul. Think'st thou the Prayers and Tears of wailing Women

Can shake the Man, who with such cold Disdain

Stood firm against those venerable Consuls,

And spurn'd the Genius of his kneeling Country ?

Vol.

Vol. It was his Pride alone that made him ours.
That Passion kept him firm ; the flattering Charm
Of humbling those, who in their Persons bore
The whole collected Majesty of *Rome*.
These Women are no proper Objects for it :
He cannot triumph o'er his Wife and Mother.
On this my Hopes are founded, that these Women
May by their gentler Influence subdue him.

Tul. Whate'er th' Event, he shall no longer here,
As wave his Passions, dictate Peace, or War.
Whether his stubborn Soul maintains its Firmness,
Or yields to Female Prayers, the *Volsian* Honour
Will be alike betray'd. If *Rome* prevails,
He stops our conquering Arms from her Destruction ;
If he rejects her Suit, he reigns our Tyrant.
But, by th' Immortal Gods ! his short-liv'd Empire
Shall never see yon radiant Sun descend.

Vol. Blest be those Gods that have at last inspir'd thee
With Resolution equal to thy Cause,
The Cause of Liberty ! —

Tul. Be sure, *Volusus*,
If that should happen which thy Hopes portend ;
Should be, by Nature tam'd, disarm'd by Love,
Respite the *Roman* Doom—He seals his own :
By Heaven ! he dies.

Vol. Let me embrace thee, *Tullus* !
Now breaking from the Cloud, which, like the Sun,
Thy own too bounteous Beams had drawn around thee.

Tul. You was deceiv'd, my Friend. When I with
Tameness,
With Tameness which astonish'd thy brave Spirit,
Seem'd to submit to that unequal Sway
He arrogated o'er me ; know, my Heart
Ne'er swell'd so high as in that cruel Moment.
My Indignation, like th' imprison'd Fire
Pent in the troubled Breast of glowing *Ætna*,
Burnt deep and silent : But, collected now,
It shall beneath its Fury bury *Marcus* !
'Tis fixt. Our Tyrant dies.

Vol. *Tullus*, my Sword
Here claims to be employ'd. — Nor mine alone —

There are some worthy *Volsci* still remaining,
Who think with us, and pine beneath the Laurels }
A Roman Chief bestows.

Tul. Go, find them strait,
And bring them to the Space before his Tent ;
'Tis there he will receive this Deputation.
Then if he sinks beneath these Womens Prayers—
Or if he does not—But, *Volufius*, wait,
I give thee strictest Charge to wait my Signal.
Perhaps I may find Means to free the *Volsci*
Without his Blood. If not—We will be free.



ACT

A C T V.

S C E N E I.

Trumpets sounding.

The Scene discovers the Camp, a Croud of Volscian Officers with Files of Soldiers, drawn up as before. Enter Coriolanus, Tullus, Galesus, Volufius. The Roman Ladies advance slowly from the Depth of the Stage, with Veturia the Mother of Coriolanus, and Volumnia his Wife, at their Head, all clad in Habits of Mourning. Coriolanus stands at the Head of the Volsci, surrounded by his Licitors; but, when he perceives his Mother and Wife, after some Struggle, he advances, and goes hastily to embrace them.

CORIANUS advancing.

LOWER your Fasces, Licitors——
LO Veturia!

Thou best of Parents!

Vet. Coriolanus, stop.

Whom am I to embrace? A Son, or Foe?

Say, in what Light am I regarded here?

Thy Mother, or thy Captive?

Cor. Justly, Madam,

You check my Fondness, that, by Nature hurry'd,

Forgot I was the General of the *Volsci*,

And you a Deputy from hostile *Rome*.

[He goes back to his former Station.]

I hear you with Respect. Speak your Commission.

Vet. Think not I come a Deputy from Rome.

Rome, once rejected, scorns a Second Suit.

You have already heard whate'er the Tongue
Of Eloquence can plead, whate'er the Wisdom

Of

Of sacred Age, the Dignity of Senates,
 And Virtue can enforce. Behold me here,
 Sent by the Shades of your immortal Fathers,
 Sent by the Genius of the *Marcian* Line,
 Commission'd by my own maternal Heart,
 To try the soft, yet stronger Powers of Nature ;
 Thus authoriz'd, I ask, nay, claim a Peace,
 On equal, fair, and honourable Terms,
 To Thee, to *Rome*, and to the *Volsian* People.
 Grant it, my Son ! Thy Mother begs it of thee,
 Thy Wife, the best, the kindest of her Sex,
 And these illustrious Matrons, who have sooth'd
 The gloomy Hours thou hast been absent from us.
 We, by whate'er is great and good in Nature,
 By every Duty, by the Gods, conjure Thee !
 To grant us Peace, and turn on other Foes
 Thy Arms, where thou may'st purchase virtuous Glory.

Cor. I should *Vetruria*, break those holy Bonds
 That hold the wide Republic of Mankind,
 Society, together ; I should grow
 A Wretch, unworthy to be call'd thy Son ;
 I should with my *Volumnia*'s fair Esteem,
 Forfeit her Love ; these Matrons would despise me —
 Could I betray the *Volsian* Cause, thus trusted,
 Thus recommended to me—No, my Mother,
 You cannot sure, you cannot ask it of me !

Vet. And does my Son so little know me ? me !
 Who took such Care to form his tender Years,
 Left to my Conduct by his dying Father ?
 Have I so ill deserv'd that Trust ? Alas !
 Am I so low in thy Esteem, that thou
 Should'st e'er imagine I could urge a Part
 Which in the least might stain the *Marcian* Honour ?
 No, let me perish rather ! perish All !
 Life has no Charms compar'd to spotless Glory !
 I only ask, thou would'st forbid thy Troops
 To waste our Lands, and to assault yon City,
 Till time be given for mild and righteous Measures,
 Grant us but One Year's Truce : Mean while thou may'st,

With

With Honour and Advantage to both Nations,
Betwixt us mediate a perpetual Peace.

Cor. Alas ! my Mother ! That were granting all.

Vet. Canst thou refuse me such a just Petition,
The First Request thy Mother ever made Thee ?
Canst thou to her Intreaties, Prayers, and Tears,
Prefer a savage obstinate Revenge ?
Have Love and Nature lost all Power within thee ?

Cor. No,——in my Heart they reign as strong as
ever.

Come, I conjure you, quit ungrateful *Rome*,
Come, and complete my Happiness at *Antium*,
You, and my dear *Volumnia*——There, *Veturia*,
There shall you see with what Respect the *Volsci*
Will treat the Wife and Mother of their General.

Vet. Treat me thyself with more Respect, my
Son ;

Nor dare to shock my Ears with such Proposals.
Shall I desert my Country, I who come
To plead her Cause ? Ah no !———A Grave in
Rome

Would better please me, than a Throne at *Antium*.

How hast thou thus forsaken all my Precepts ?

How hast thou thus forgot thy Love to *Rome* ?

O *Coriolanus*, when with hostile Arms,

With Fire and Sword, you enter'd on our Borders,

Did not the fostering Air, that breathes around us,

Allay thy guilty Fury, and instil

A certain native Sweetness thro' thy Soul ?

Did not your Heart thus murmur to itself ?

“ These Walls contain whatever can command

“ Respect from Virtue, or is dear to Nature,

“ The Monuments of Piety and Valour ;

“ The sculptur'd Forms, the Trophies of my Fathers,

“ My household Gods, my Mother, Wife, and Chil-

“ dren !”

Cor. Ah ! you seduce me with too tender Views !—

These Walls contain the most corrupt of Men,

A base seditious Herd ; who trample Order,

Distinction, Justice, Laws, beneath their Feet,

Insolent Foes to Worth, the Foes of Virtue !

Vet.

Vet. Thou hast not thence a Right to lift thy Hand
Against the whole Community, which forms
Thy ever sacred Country—That consists
Not of coeval Citizens alone:
It knows no Bounds ; it has a Retrospect
To Ages past ; it looks on those to come ;
And grasps of all the general Worth and Virtue:
Suppose, my Son, that I to thee had been
A harsh obdurate Parent, even unjust :
How would the monstrous Thought with Horror strike
thee,

Of plunging, from Revenge, thy raging Steel
Into her Breast, who nurs'd thy infant Years !——

Cor. Rome is no more ! that Rome which nurs'd my
Youth ;

That Rome, conducted by *Patrician* Virtue,
She is no more ! My Sword shall now chastise
These Sons of Pride and Dirt ! Her upstart Tyrants !
Who have debas'd the noblest State on Earth
Into a sordid Democratic Faction,
Why will my Mother join her Cause to theirs ?

Vet. Forbid it, *Jove* ! that I should e'er distinguish
My Interest from the general Cause of Rome ;
Or live to see a foreign hostile Arm
Reform th' Abuses of our Land of Freedom.

[*Pausing.*

But 'tis in vain, I find, to reason more.
Is there no way to reach thy filial Heart,
Once fam'd as much for Piety as Courage ?
Oft hast thou justly triumph'd, *Coriolanus* ;
Now yield one Triumph to thy widow'd Mother ;
And send me back amidst the loud Acclaims,
The grateful Transports of deliver'd Rome,
The happiest far, the most renown'd of Women !

Cor. Why, why, *Veturia*, wilt thou plead in vain ?

Tul. [*Aside to Volufius.*] See, see, *Volufius*, how the
strong Emotions

Of powerful Nature shake his inmost Soul !
See how they tear him.—If he long resists them,
He is a God, or something worse than Man.

Vet.

Vet. O *Marcius*, *Marcius*! canst thou treat me thus?

Canst thou complain of *Rome's* Ingratitude,
Yet be to me so cruelly ungrateful?
To me! who anxious rear'd thy Youth to Glory!
Whose only Joy, these many Years, has been,
To boast that *Coriolanus* was my Son?
And dost thou then renounce me for thy Mother?
Spurn me before these Chiefs, before those Soldiers,
That weep thy stubborn Cruelty? Art thou
The hardest Man to me in this Assembly?
Look at me! Speak! *[Pausing, during which he appears in great Agitation.]*

Still dost thou turn away?
Inexorable? Silent? ——— Then, behold me,
Behold thy Mother, at whose Feet thou oft
Hast kneel'd with Fondness, kneeling now at thine,
Wetting thy stern Tribunal with her Tears.

Cor. Veturia, rise. I cannot see thee thus. *[Raises her.]*
It is a Sight uncomely to behold
My Mother at my Feet, and that to urge
A Suit, relentless Honour must refuse.

Volum. (*Advancing.*) Since, *Coriolanus*, thou dost still retain,

In spite of all thy Mother now has pleaded,
Thy dreadful Purpose, Ah! how much in vain
Were it for me to join my Supplications!
The Voice of thy *Volumnia*, once so pleasing,
How shall it hope to touch the Husband's Heart,
When Proof against the Tears of such a Parent?
I dare not urge what to thy Mother thou
So firmly hast deny'd—But I must weep—
Must weep, if not thy harsh Severity,
At least thy Situation. O permit me, *[Taking his*

Hand.]

To shed my gushing Tears upon thy Hand!
To press it with the cordial Lips of Love!
And take my last Farewel!

Cor. Yet, yet, my Soul,
Be firm, and persevere ———

E

Volum.

Volum. Ah *Coriolanus*!

Is then this Hand, this Hand to me devoted,
The Pledge of Nuptial Love, that has so long
Protected, blest'd, and shelter'd us with Kindness,
Now lifted up against us? Yet I love it,
And, with submissive Veneration, bow
Beneath th'Affliction which it heaps upon us.
But O! what nobler Transports would it give thee!
What Joy beyond Expression! couldst thou once
Surmount the furious Storm of fierce Revenge,
And yield thee to the Charms of Love and Mercy.
Oh make the glorious Trial!

Cor. Mother! Wife!

Are all the Powers of Nature leagu'd against me?
I cannot! — will not! — Leave me, my *Volumnia*!

Volum. Well, I obey — How bitter thus to part!
Upon such Terms to part! perhaps for ever! —
But tell me, ere I hence unroot my Feet,
When to my lonely Home I shall return,
What from their Father, to our little Slaves,
Unconscious of the Shame to which you doom them,
What shall I say? [*Pausing; he highly agitated.*]
Nay — tell me, *Coriolanus*!

Cor. Tell thee! what shall I tell thee? See these
Tears!

These Tears will tell thee what exceeds the Pow'r
Of Words to speak, whate'er the Son, the Husband,
And Father in one complicated Pang,
Can feel — But leave me; — even in Pity leave me!
Cease, cease, to torture me, my dear *Volumnia*!
You only tear my Heart; but cannot shake it:
For by th'immortal Gods, the dread Avengers
Of broken Faith! —

Volum. (*Kneeling.*) Oh swear not, *Coriolanus*!
Oh vow not our Destruction!

Vet. Daughter, rise,

Let us no more before the *Volscian* People
Expose ourselves a Spectacle of Shame.
It is in vain we try to melt a Breast,
That, to the best Affections Nature gives us,

Prefers the worst --- hear me, proud Man! I have
A Heart as stout as thine. I came not hither,
To be sent back rejected, baffled, sham'd,
Hateful to *Rome*, because I am thy Mother:
A *Roman* Matron knows, in such Extremes,
What Part to take --- And thus I came provided.

[*Drawing from under her Robe a Dagger.*

Go! barbarous Son! go! double Parricide!
Rush o'er my Corse to thy belov'd Revenge!
Tread on the bleeding Breast of her, to whom
Thou ow'st thy Life! --- Lo, thy first Victim!

Cor. (*Seizing her Hand.*) Ha!
What dost thou mean?

Vet. To die while *Rome* is free,
To seize the Moment ere thou art her Tyrant.

Cor. O use thy Pow'r more justly! Set not thus
My treach'rous Heart in Arms against my Reason,
Here! here! thy Dagger will be well employ'd;
Strike here, and reconcile my fighting Duties.

Vet. Off! --- Set me free! --- Think'st thou that Grasp,
which binds

My feeble Hand, can fetter too my Will?
No, my proud Son! Thou canst not make me live,
If *Rome* must fall! --- No Pow'r on Earth can do it!

Cor. Pity me, generous *Volsci*! --- You are Men ---
Must it then be? --- Confusion! --- Do I yield?
What is it? Is it Weakness? Is it Virtue? ---
Well! -----

Vet. What? Speak!

Cor. O, no! --- my stifled Words refuse
A Passage to the Throes that wring my Heart.

Vet. Nay, if thou yieldst, yield like *Coriolanus*;
And what thou do'st, do nobly!

Cor. (*Quitting her Hand.*) There! --- 'Tis done! ---
Thine is the Triumph, Nature!

[*To Veturia in a low Tone of Voice.*

Ah *Veturia*!

Rome by thy Aid is sav'd --- but thy Son lost.

Vet. He never can be lost, who saves his Country.

Cor. (*Turning to 'the Roman Ladies.*) Ye Matrons,
Guardians of the *Roman* Safety,
You to the Senate may report this Answer,
We grant the Truce you ask. But on these Terms :
That *Rome*, mean-time shall to a Peace agree,
Fair, equal, just, and such as may secure
The Safety, Rights, and Honour of the *Volsci*.

[*To the Troops.*

Volsci, we raise the Siege. Go, and prepare,
By the first Dawn, for your Return to *Antium*.

[*As the Troops retire, and Coriolanus turns to the
Roman Ladies.*

Tul. (*To Volufius, aside.*) 'Tis as we wish'd, *Volufius*
--- To your Station,
But mark me well --- Till thou shalt hear my Call,
I charge thee not to stir. One Offer more
My Honour bids me make to this proud Man,
Before we strike the Blow --- If he rejects it,
His Blood be on his Head.

Vol. Well! I obey you. [*He goes out.*

Cor. Be it thy Care, *Galesus*, that a Safeguard
Attend these noble Matrons back to *Rome*.

SCENE II.

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS.

Cor. I plainly, *Tullus*, by your Looks discern
You disapprove my Conduct.

Tul. *Caius Marcius*,
I mean not to assail thee with the Clamour
Of loud Reproaches, and the War of Words ;
But, Pride apart, and all that can pervert
The Light of steady Reason, here to make
A candid fair Proposal.

Cor. Speak. I hear thee.

Tul. I need not tell thee, that I have perform'd
My utmost Promise. Thou hast been protected ;

Hast

Hast had thy amplest, most ambitious Wish :
 Thy wounded Pride is heal'd, thy dear Revenge
 Completely sated ; and, to crown thy Fortune,
 At the same time, thy Peace with *Rome* restor'd.
 Thou art no more a *Volscian*, but a *Roman*.
 Return, return ; thy Duty calls upon thee,
 Still to protect the City thou hast sav'd :
 It still may be in Danger from our Arms.

Cor. Insolent Man ! Is this thy fair Proposal ?

Tul. Be patient — Hear me speak — I have
 already

From *Rome* protected thee : now from the *Volsci*,
 From their just Vengeance, I will still protect thee.
 Retire. I will take care thou mayst with Safety.

Cor. With Safety ! — Heav'ns ! — And think'st thou
Coriolanus

Will stoop to thee for Safety ? No ! my Safeguard
 Is in myself, a Bosom void of Blame,
 And the Great Gods, Protectors of the Just. ---
 O 'tis an Act of Cowardice and Baseness,
 To seize the very Time my Hands are fetter'd,
 By the strong Chain of former Obligations,
 The safe sure Moment to insult me. --- Gods !
 Were I now free, as on that Day I was,
 When at *Corioli* I tam'd thy Pride,
 This had not been.

Tul. Thou speak'st the Truth : It had not.
 O for that Time again ! Propitious Gods,
 If you will bless me, grant it ! --- Know, for that,
 For that dear Purpose, I have now propos'd
 Thou shouldst return. I pray thee, *Marcus*, do
 it !

And we shall meet again on nobler Terms.

Cor. When to the *Volsci* I have clear'd my Faith,
 Doubt not I shall find Means to meet thee nobly.
 We then our generous Quarrel may decide
 In the bright Front of some embattled Field,
 And not in private Brawls, like fierce Barbarians.

Tul.

Tul. Thou canst not hope Acquittal from the *Volsci*.——

Cor. I do : —— Nay more, expect their Approbation,

Their Thanks ! I will obtain them such a Peace

As thou durst never ask ; a perfect Union

Of their whole Nation with imperial *Rome*

In all her Privileges, all her Rights.

By the just Gods, I will ! what would'st thou more ?

Tul. What would I more ! Proud *Roman* ; This I would ;

Fire the curst Forest where these *Roman* Wolves

Haunt and infest their nobler Neighbours round them ;

Extirpate from the Bosom of this Land,

A false perfidious People, who, beneath

The Mask of Freedom, are a Combination

Against the Liberty of Human-kind,

The genuine Seed of Outlaws and of Robbers.

Cor. The Seed of Gods !——'Tis not for thee, vain Boaster !

'Tis not for such as Thou, so often spar'd

By her victorious Sword, to talk of *Rome*,

But with Respect and awful Veneration.

Whate'er her Blots, whate'er her giddy Factions,

There is more Virtue in one single Year

Of *Roman* Story, than your *Volscian* Annals

Can boast thro' all your creeping dark Duration !

Tul. I thank thy Rage. This full displays the Traitor.

Cor. Ha ! Traitor !

Tul. First, to thy own Country, Traitor !
And Traitor, now, to mine !

Cor. Ye heavenly Powers !

I shall break loose—My Rage—But let us part—

Left my rash Hand should do a hasty Deed

My cooler Thought forbids.

Tul. Begone—Return—

To head the *Roman* Troops. I grant thee Quit-
tance

Full

Full and complete of all those Obligations
 Thou hast so oft insultingly complain'd
 Fetter'd thy Hands. They now are free. I court
 The worst thy Sword can do ; whilst thou from me
 Hast nothing to expect, but sore Destruction.
 Quit then this hostile Camp. Once more I tell thee,
 Thou art not here one single Hour in Safety.

Cor. Think'st thou to fright me hence ?

Tul. Thou wilt not then ?

Thou wilt not take the Safety which I offer ?

Cor. Till I have clear'd my Honour in your Council,
 And prov'd before them all, to thy Confusion,
 The Falshood of thy Charge ; as soon in Battle
 I would before thee fly, and howl for Mercy,
 As quit the Station they have here assign'd me.

Tul. Volusius ! Hoa !

S C E N E III.

To them VOLUSIUS, and Conspirators, with their Swords drawn.

Tul. Seize, and secure the Traitor !

Cor. (*Laying his Hand upon his Sword.*) Who dares
 approach me, dies !

Vol. Die thou !

[*As Coriolanus draws his Sword,
 Volusius and the Conspirators
 rush upon and stab him. Tul-
 lus standing by without having
 drawn his Sword.*]

Cor. (*Endeavouring to free himself*) Off ! —
 Villains !

Oh murdering Slaves ! Assassinating Cowards ! [Falling.
 [Dies.

S C E N E IV.

[Upon the Noise of the Tumult, enter hastily to them
Galesus, the other Deputies of the Volscian States,
Officers Friends of Coriolanus, and Titus with
a large Band of Soldiers.

Gal. (*As he enters.*) Are we a Nation rul'd by
Laws, or Fury?

How! Whence this Tumult? [*Pausing.*
Gods! what do I see?

The noble *Marcus* slain!

Tul. You see a Traitor
Punish'd as he deserv'd, the *Roman* Yoke
That thrall'd us broken, and the *Volsci* free!

Gal. Hear me, great *Jove*! Hear all you injur'd
Powers

Of Friendship, Hospitality, and Faith!
By that heroic Blood, which from the Ground
Reeking to you for Vengeance cries, I swear!
This impious Breach of your eternal Laws,
This daring Outrage on the *Volscian* Honour,
Shall find in me a rigorous Avenger!
On the same Earth, polluted by their Crime,
I will not live with these unpunish'd Ruffians!

Tul. This Deed is mine: I claim it all!—These Men,
These valiant Men, were but my Instruments,
To punish him who to our Face betray'd us.
We shall not fear to answer to the *Volsci*,
In a full Council of their States at *Antium*,
The glorious Charge of having stabb'd their Tyrant!

Gal. Titus, till then secure them.

[*Tullus and Conspirators are led off.*

[*Galesus, standing over the Body of Coriolanus, after a short Pause, proceeds.*

Volscian Fathers,
And ye, brave Soldiers, see an awful Scene,
Demanding serious solemn Meditation.

This

This Man was once the Glory of his Age,
Disinterested, just, with every Virtue
Of civil Life adorn'd, in Arms unequall'd.
His only Blot was this ; That, much provok'd,
He rais'd his vengeful Arm against his Country.
And, lo ! the righteous Gods have now chastis'd him,
Even by the Hands of those for whom he fought.

Whatever private Views and Passions plead,
No Cause can justify so black a Deed :
These, when the angry Tempest clouds the Soul,
May darken Reason, and her Course controul,
But when the Prospect clears, her startled Eye
Must from the treacherous Gulph with Horror fly,
On whose wild Wave, by stormy Passions tost,
So many hapless Wretches have been lost.
Then be this Truth the Star by which we steer ;
Above Ourselves our COUNTRY should be dear.

The E N D.



EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. WOFFINGTON.

*WELL! Gentlemen! And are ye still so vain
To treat our Sex with arrogant Disdain,
And think, to you alone by partial Heav'n
Superior Sense and sov'reign Pow'r are giv'n,
When in the Story told To-night, you find,
With what a boundless Sway we rule the Mind;
And, by a few soft Words of ours, with Ease,
Can turn the proudest Hearts just where we please?
If an old Mother had such pow'rful Charms,—
To stop a stubborn Roman's conqu'ring Arms,—
Soldiers and Statesmen of these Days, with you
What, think you, would a fair young Mistress do?
If with my grave Discourse, and wrinkled Face,
I thus could bring a Hero to disgrace,
How absolutely may I hope to reign
Now I am turn'd to my own Shape again!
However, I will use my Empire well;
And, if I have a certain magic Spell,
Or in my Tongue, or Wit, or Shape, or Eyes,
Which can subdue the Strong, and fool the Wise,
Be not alarm'd: I will not interfere
In State Affairs, nor undertake to steer
The Helm of Government, ——— as we are told
Those Female Politicians did of old:*

Such

EPILOGUE.

*Such dangerous Heights I never wish'd to climb —
Thank Heav'n! I better can employ my Time —
Ask you to what my Pow'r I shall apply?
To make my Subjects blest is my Reply.
My Purposes are gracious all, and kind.
Some may be told ——— and some may be divin'd :
One, which at present I have most at Heart,
To you without Reserve I will impart :
It is my Sov'reign Will, ——— Hear, and obey, ———
That you with Candour treat this Orphan Play.*





